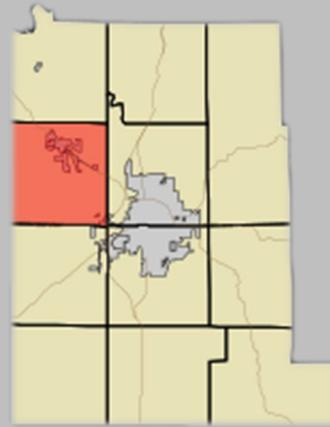


RICHLAND TOWNSHIP

TOWN OF ELLETTSVILLE



Public Safety Subcommittee

Draft Report to the Reorganization

Committee

February 27, 2026



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Proposal for Law Enforcement Services

In November 2025, the Town of Ellettsville, Indiana and Richland Township, Monroe County, Indiana announced the two entities were exploring a proposal to formally reorganize into a single governmental entity. One of goals of this collaborative effort is to protect essential public services. Law enforcement services fall into that category.

This section is being presented to the Reorganization Committee as the Ellettsville Police Department’s official proposal for additional personnel and facilities that are essential to providing law enforcement services to the Reorganized Town.

Summary of Governmental Entities

Town of Ellettsville

The Town of Ellettsville encompasses approximately 7.33 square miles in northwestern Monroe County. The population in 2024 was 6,698 according to the 2024 American Community Survey.

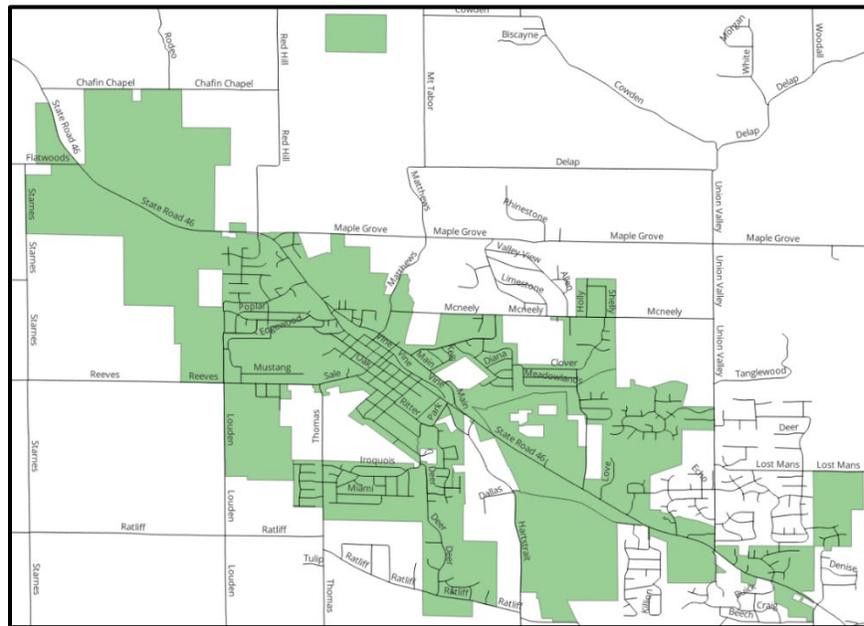


Figure 1: Geographical Boundaries of the Town of Ellettsville

Approximately 5.39 miles of State Road 46 are in the geographical boundaries of the Town of Ellettsville. In downtown Ellettsville, eastbound State Road 46 has an annual average daily traffic (AADT) count of 26,195. Other major thoroughfares include Union Valley Road, Hartstrait Road, Matthews Drive, Ratliff Road, Thomas Road, and Reeves Road.



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Richland Township

Richland Township encompasses approximately 35.4 square miles in northwestern Monroe County. The population in 2024 was 15,190 according to the 2024 American Community Survey.

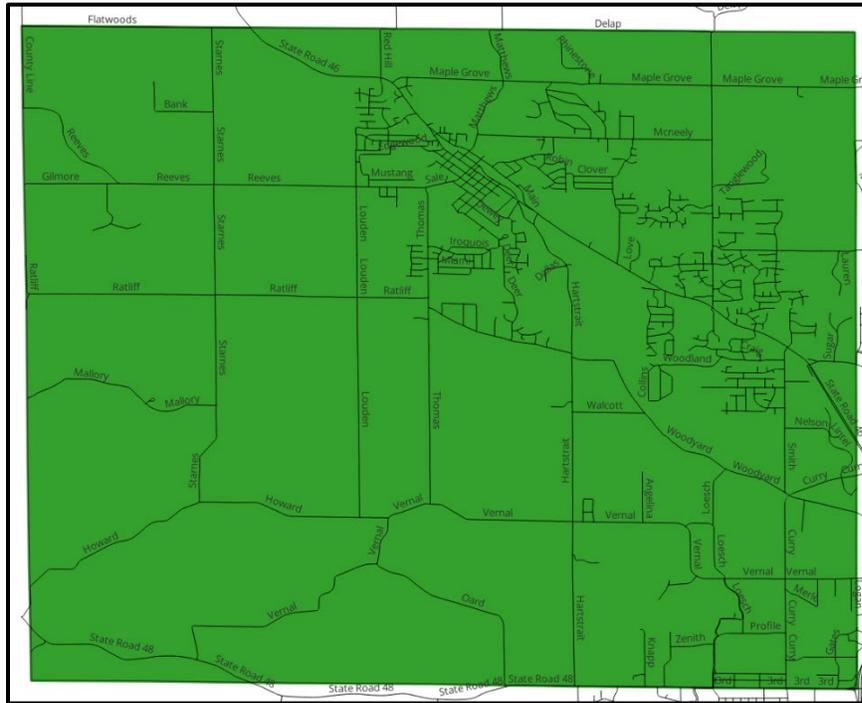


Figure 3: Geographical Boundaries of Richland Township

In addition to the 5.39 miles of State Road 46 within the geographical boundaries of the Town of Ellettsville, an additional mile of State Road 46 is within the boundaries of Richland Township. Approximately 3.66 miles of State Road 48 and 0.13 miles of State Road 43 are also located within the boundaries of Richland Township. State Road 48 has an annual average daily traffic (AADT) count of 16,209. Other major thoroughfares include Maple Grove Road, McNeely Street, Smith Pike, Vernal Pike, and Curry Pike.



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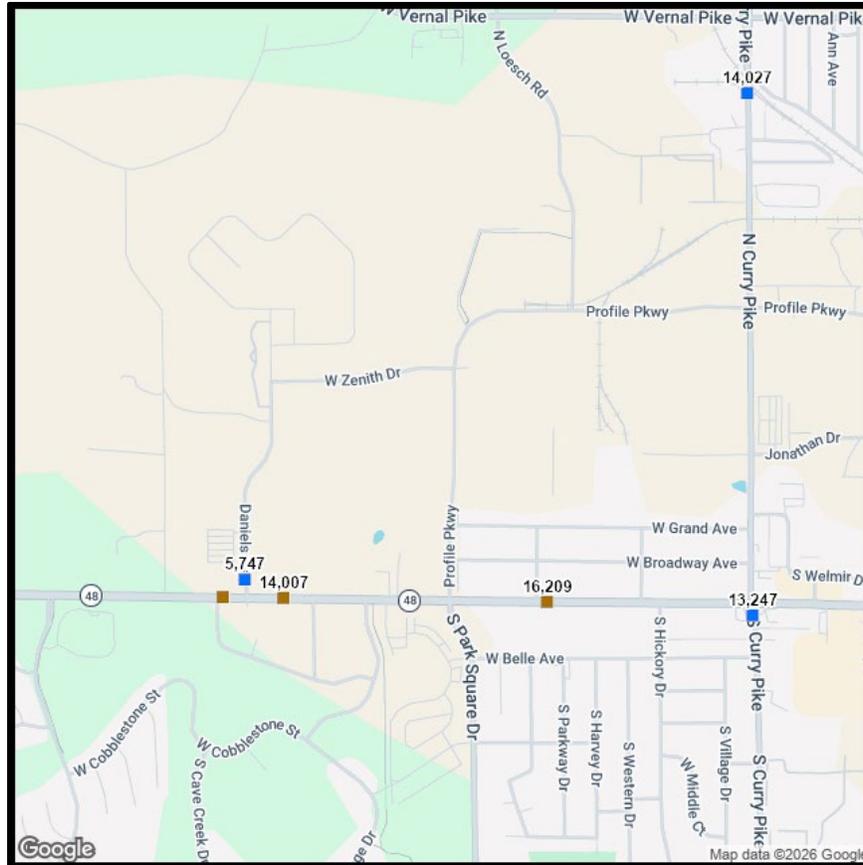


Figure 4: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Count for State Road 48 (Source: INDOT)

A commercial and industrial corridor exists along Vernal Pike, Curry Pike, and Profile Parkway. Entities include Cook Medical, Simtra BioPharma, TASUS Corporation, Troyer Foods, Ben Tire Distributors, and Printpack.

Ivy Tech’s Bloomington campus, with an enrollment of 11,103 during the 2024-2025 school year, resides in the geographical boundaries of Richland Township.

The commercial and industrial entities along with the post-secondary university account for a significant increase in the daily population of Richland Township and thus contribute to the number of calls for service to which law enforcement responds.

Quick Comparison

	Richland Township	Town of Ellettsville	Difference	% Change
Area	35.40 sq miles	7.33 sq miles	28.07	+382.94%
Population	15,190	6,698	8,492	+126.78%

Table 1 – Quick Comparison of Richland Township and Town of Ellettsville Population Data From 2024 American Community Survey



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Current Staffing

While there is no universal, official standard for the number of police officers per capita, in the United States the average rate is 2.4 full-time sworn officers per 1,000 residents. In the Midwest, the average rate is 2.2 full-time sworn officers per 1,000 residents.

It should be noted that the average rate of full-time sworn officers includes all full-time sworn officers. These averages do not consider the primary assignment of those full-time sworn officers. For instance, the Ellettsville Police Department's School Resource Officers' primary responsibility, providing safety and security to students, staff, and faculty, precludes them from responding to calls for service outside of their respective school buildings. Thus, the number of full-time sworn officers available to respond to calls for service is skewed.

Richland Township

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office is the primary law enforcement agency for unincorporated areas of Monroe County, including Richland Township. According to the 2024 American Community Survey, the population of the unincorporated areas of Monroe County was 55,982. According to the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office had forty-five full-time sworn police officers in 2024. This is an average of 0.81 officers per 1,000 residents.

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office is currently staffed by forty-four full-time sworn officers.

Town of Ellettsville

The Ellettsville Police Department is the primary law enforcement agency for the Town of Ellettsville. According to the 2024 American Community Survey, the population of the Town of Ellettsville was 6,698. The Ellettsville Police Department had fifteen full-time sworn police officers in 2024. This is an average of 2.5 officers per 1,000 residents.

The Ellettsville Police Department is currently staffed by fourteen full-time sworn officers.

Proposal for Reorganization

Personnel

To ensure adequate law enforcement resources exist for the Reorganized Town, the Ellettsville Police Department is recommending the addition of thirteen full-time positions: twelve full-time sworn officers and one full-time civilian. These twelve full-time sworn officer positions will bolster the number of patrol officers whose primary assignment is responding to calls for service, creating an average of 1.2 full-time patrol officers per 1,000 residents and an overall average of 1.7 full-time sworn officers per 1,000 residents. This



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increase in personnel will ensure the police department is prepared for current and future challenges that exist in policing a growing community.

Facilities

The Town of Ellettsville's police station, a purpose-built facility, was built in 2004. The facility is in good condition but will require renovations to maintain its functionality with the anticipated increase in personnel and responsibilities. These renovations include a conference room, a dedicated office for investigators, a renewed space for patrol officers, and a new classroom space for training activities. These renovations will ensure the police department's personnel have adequate space conducive to performing their duties effectively and efficiently.

Timeline

The police department recognizes the significance of the financial impact created by the addition of thirteen positions and suggests a phased-in approach over the next five to seven years. The immediate need is the addition of three full-time sworn officers. These three additional full-time sworn officer positions will create an average of 1.13 full-time sworn officers per 1,000 residents for the Reorganized Town.

Capital improvements, such as the suggested building renovations, can also be accomplished in phases. The renewed space for patrol officers is the least expensive but also the highest priority, with additional office space and the new classroom space being secondary and tertiary.

Conclusion

The Ellettsville Police Department is excited about the prospect of a Reorganized Town. The department stands ready to face the challenges of providing law enforcement services to the residents of Richland Township with enthusiasm, pride, and dedication.



Considerations for Fire Protection in a Consolidated Ellettsville-Richland Township

The Ellettsville Fire Department currently provides fire, rescue, and medical first response services for the Town of Ellettsville and Richland Township. A consolidation would not change the response area or responsibilities of the fire department. The needs assessed in this document are based on current and future needs that would need to be addressed whether the department remains in its current form, as a Fire Territory, or as a part of the consolidated Town and Township.

Current Demographics

Staffing

The department currently has 17 full-time personnel and 21 part-time personnel.

Full-Time Staff (M-F work schedule)	Full Time Staff (48 on – 96 off schedule)
1 Fire Chief	3 Captains
1 Deputy Chief	9 Firefighters
1 Assistant Chief	
2 Fire Marshals	Part Time Staff
	21 Firefighters

Fire Stations
Station 71: 5000 blk Hwy 46, Ellettsville
Station 81: 900 blk Curry Pike

The department operates 3 shifts of firefighters working 48 hours on duty and 96 hours off duty. Each station is staffed with 3 personnel per shift for a total of 6 personnel on duty per shift. This staffing level is currently met with a combination of full-time and part-time firefighters.

Fleet

The fire department fleet currently consists of the following resources:

Support and Administrative Vehicles	Major Apparatus
3 Command Vehicles	3 Engines (2 front line, 1 reserve)
1 Fire Marshal / Safety Officer Vehicle	1 Aerial Truck
1 Support Vehicle (F250 pickup)	1 Water Tender
1 EMS Squad	1 Brush Truck
	1 UTV (Utility Task Vehicle)



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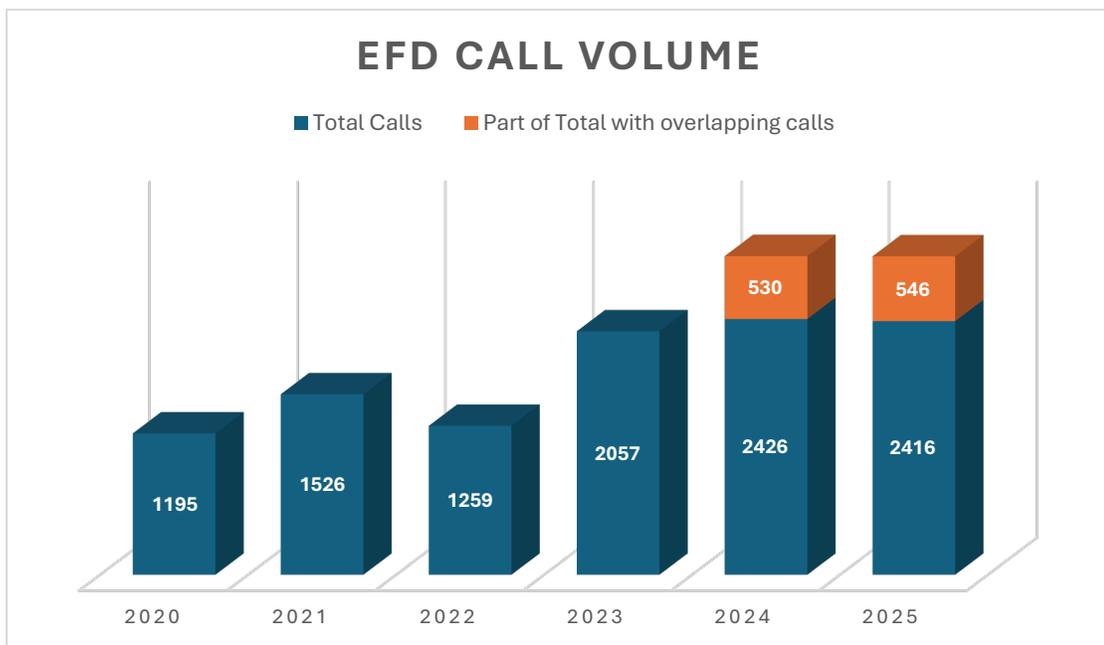


Additionally, the following apparatus have been purchased and are on order:

- 1 Engine purchased with Township Cumulative Building and Equipment (CBE) funds as a replacement for the department's 27-year-old engine – expected delivery 2026
- 1 Aerial Platform purchased with Tax Increment Financing District funds as an addition to fleet – expected delivery 2027

Call Volume

Annual call volume has increased over the last 5 years from a 2020 total of 1195 requests for service to 2416 incidents in 2025. This represents a 102% increase in call volume. Another important metric is the number of times the department experiences overlapping calls. During overlapping calls, both stations are committed, leaving no available resources in the response area. In 2024, there were 530 overlapping calls. In 2025, there were 546 overlapping calls.

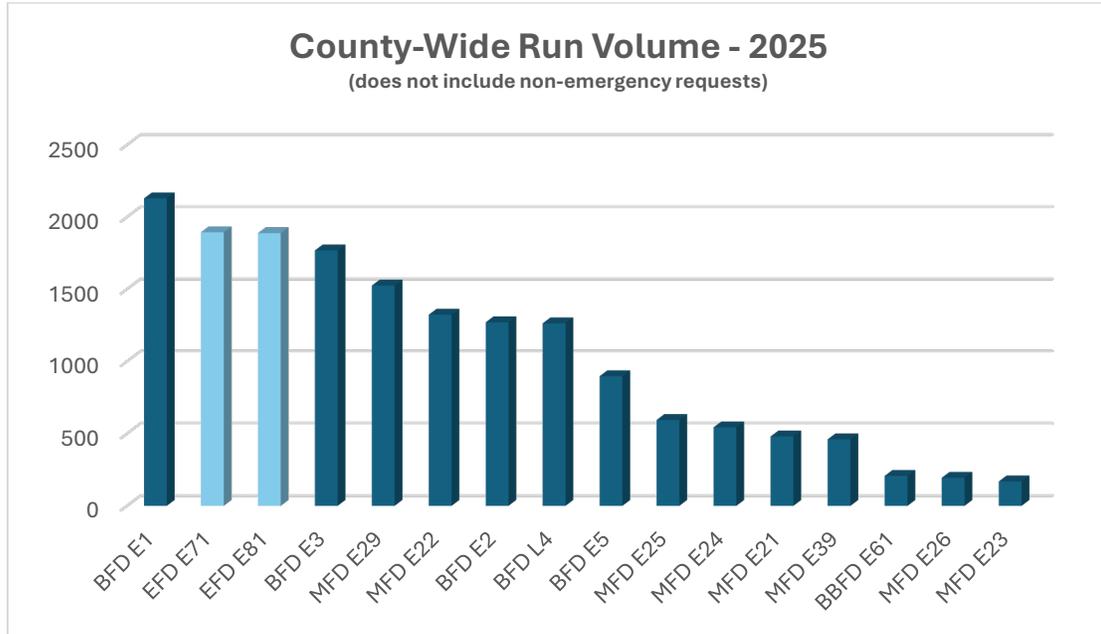




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Ellettsville’s two fire stations rank as the 2nd and 3rd busiest for emergency requests for service amongst all stations in Monroe County (including Bloomington City).



Funding

The Ellettsville Fire Department receives approximately half of its operating budget funds from the Town of Ellettsville and the other half from Richland Township. The department’s current operating budget is approximately \$3.4 million. Future budget planning projections account for needed shift staffing increases and incremental increases in operating costs.

2026 Operating Budget:	\$3,378,267
2027 Estimated Operating Budget:	\$3,818,539
2028 Estimated Operating Budget:	\$3,971,281
2029 Estimated Operating Budget:	\$4,130,132

Assessed Property Value Protected:	\$1,846,667,701
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Current Standing

Needs Upon Consolidation

Of all the entities affected by a potential merging of Richland Township and the Town of Ellettsville governments, the Fire Department is one that will arguably see the least impact by this change. The Ellettsville Fire Department was established in 1888 and has been providing protection to the Township in addition to the Town since 1947. It has operated in its current



2-station configuration since 1971. No additional vehicles or equipment will be required to maintain the current level of service provided to the area. The current budget projection for 2027 primarily covers regular increases in operating costs, mandated increased contributions to the pension system, and funding for 3 additional firefighter positions as part of the department’s ongoing efforts to raise staffing levels to meet minimum national standards¹. This staffing increase would provide a total of 7 firefighters on duty per day between the department’s two engine companies.

Future Challenges

Staffing

The Richland-Ellettsville area has seen increases in population and development in recent years. It is expected that a combined Town-Township government will make conditions favorable for further growth and development in the area. The Ellettsville Fire Department will need to be proactive in maintaining staffing, equipment, and funding to meet the needs of this growing community.

Additional Firefighters: Assuming the approval of additional firefighter positions requested in the 2027 budget, the most immediate challenge for EFD is the need for an additional 3 firefighter positions. Currently EFD operates with 6 firefighters on duty each day (3 at each station). If the 2027 staffing request is approved, staffing would increase to 7 on duty per day. In order to meet minimum national standards for fire service staffing, EFD needs to increase staffing to 8 firefighters on duty per day (4 at each station). This would be fulfilled by the hiring of another 3 firefighter positions.

Shift Supervision: An additional staffing need that has been identified is for dedicated shift supervisors. This would be an addition of 3 command level officers (1 on each shift). This position would provide an officer to oversee the administrative functions involving shift personnel, allowing the administrative chiefs that currently perform these duties to focus on other priorities. Additionally, this role would provide a dedicated command officer at major incidents to direct scene operations so crew officers do not have to divide their focus between overall incident command and direct supervision of their personnel.² This increases scene efficiency as well as safety.

Fleet

Fire apparatus replacement is a major expense for any community. Currently, a fire engine (pumper truck) costs around \$1.3 million and an aerial apparatus (ladder truck) costs around \$2.4 million. Additionally, build time for a new fire apparatus range from 18 months to 5

¹ National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1750: Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Services, Special Operations, and Fire Prevention Activities (2026), set the minimum staffing for an engine company at 4 personnel on duty (section 5.2.3.1.1).

² NFPA 1750 Section 5.2.2.3 calls for a supervisory chief officer to respond to all full alarm assignments and to ensure an incident management system is established.



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years. It is important to have an apparatus replacement plan to stagger replacements and plan the allocation of capital funds to cover this expense.

Factors such as use history, maintenance and repair cost, safety and technology enhancements, and general age are factored into the need to replace a fire apparatus. General guidance on apparatus age states a front-line apparatus should be placed in reserve states after 15 years of service. A reserve apparatus is only used in front-line service when the regular front-line apparatus is not available (such as when it is down for maintenance or repair). Additionally, any fire apparatus over 25 years of age should be replaced.³ It is the goal of the Ellettsville Fire Department to place its front line engines in reserve status after 15 years of service and to undertake replacement of any apparatus at 20 years of service so that its replacement is in service before the 25 year service time of the retiring apparatus.

Department staff, command, and support vehicles follow a different replacement schedule since they are not built to the standards demanded of fire apparatus and their frequent use in day-to-day operations. These vehicles are on a 10-year replacement plan.

Vehicle	CY 2026 Age	Replacement
<i>Fire Apparatus</i>		
1999 Pierce Saber (Reserve Engine 72)	27 years	In Progress
2007 Pierce Dash (Truck 71)	19 years	2027
2012 Pierce Saber (Engine 71)	14 years	2032
2012 Pierce Encore (Rescue 71)	14 years	2032
2016 Pierce Freightliner (Tender 71)	10 years	2036
2019 Ford F-350 (Brush 71)	7 years	2039
2022 Pierce Saber	4 years	2042

Vehicle	CY 2026 Age	Replacement
<i>Staff, Command, and Support Vehicles</i>		
2018 Ford Interceptor (Squad 71)	8 years	2028
2020 F-250 (Support 71)	6 years	2030
2022 Dodge Durango Pursuit (Chief 7-1)	4 years	2032
2022 Dodge Durango Pursuit (Chief 7-2)	4 years	2032
2022 Dodge Durango Pursuit (Chief 7-0)	4 years	2032
2023 Dodge Durango Pursuit (Prevention 71)	3 years	2033

³ NFPA 1910: Inspection, Maintenance, Refurbishment, Test, and Retirement of In-Service Emergency Vehicles and Marine Fighting Vessels (2024) - Annex D (Section D.1)



Stations

Township Fire Station Relocation: In 2024, in cooperation with Richland Township, a study was conducted on replacing the current township fire station. The current building was built in 1971 in the southeast corner of the township and was originally designed for 1 employee on duty (see figure 1). The study created a design for a new station and secured a location at Hartstrait Rd and Vernal Pike at no cost for the land. The station design and location will meet current and future operational needs of the department and provide better response coverage in southern and central portions of the Township (see figure 2). The Township has identified funds for construction of the station and a final decision to proceed will be made once the question on creating a Fire Territory is determined.

Third Fire Station: Development on the west side of Ellettsville such as Harman Farms will increase density in the northwestern portion of the Town and Township. As these areas build out, there will be an increased demand for services. This will also result in higher potential for overlapping calls that will increase the occasions when no resources are available in the area. The developers of Harman Farms have provided the land for a future fire station at no cost to the Town or Township. While the addition of a third station is most likely 5 or more years away, it will close the majority of the coverage gaps remaining in the Town and Township (see figure 3).

Conclusion

The Department, along with the Town and Township are currently investigating the formation of a Fire Territory. With a Fire Territory, decisions regarding fire protection will be made at the Town and Township level as opposed to the County level. If Township level government is eliminated, as has been proposed at the state legislature, the fire territory would be dissolved and control over fire protection in the Township would fall to County government. Should the Fire Territory be formed *and* the merger of the Town and Township also pass, the Fire Territory will be dissolved and the Fire Department will fall under the governance of the new Town-Township entity. This would provide a permanent solution to keeping control of fire protection at the most local level.

The considerations and challenges presented here are not unique to the circumstances of forming a combined Town-Township. This document is merely providing a roadmap that illustrates the existing and future needs of the Fire Department that is currently serving the residents of Ellettsville and Richland Township.



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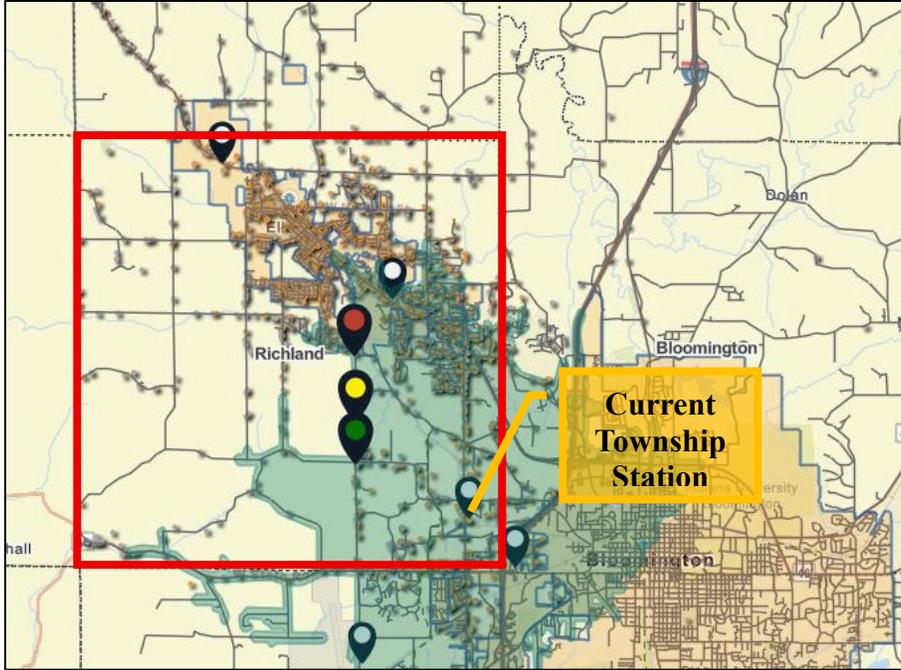


Figure 6: Current Township Station Coverage Area with 9-minute response analysis shaded green

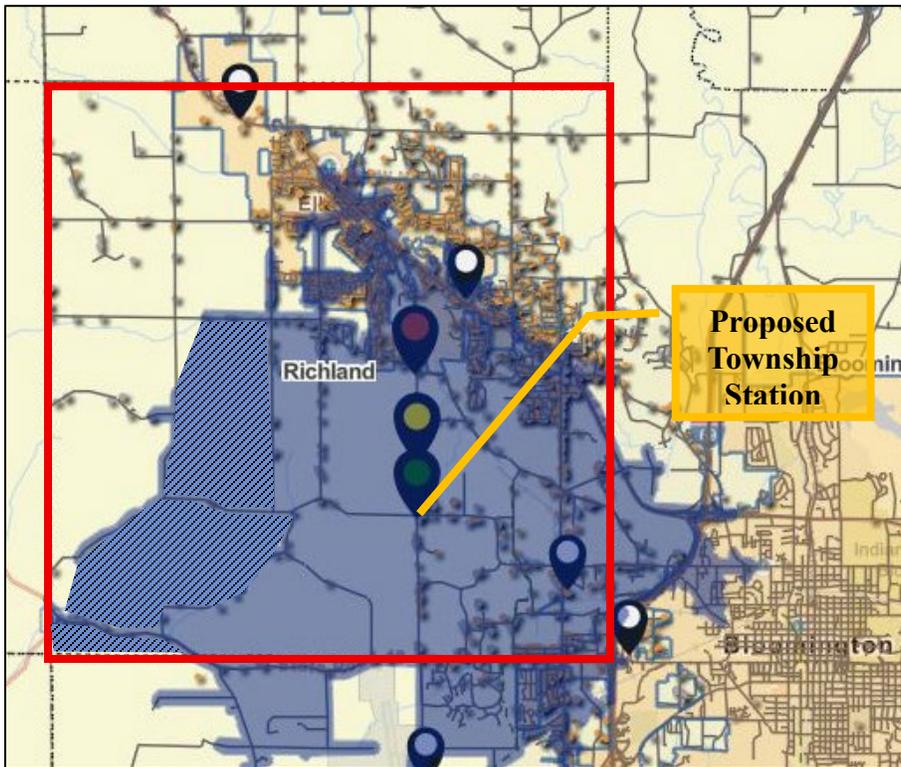


Figure 7: Proposed Township Station Coverage Area (9-minute response analysis)
*hatched areas are estimates depending on access points to properties



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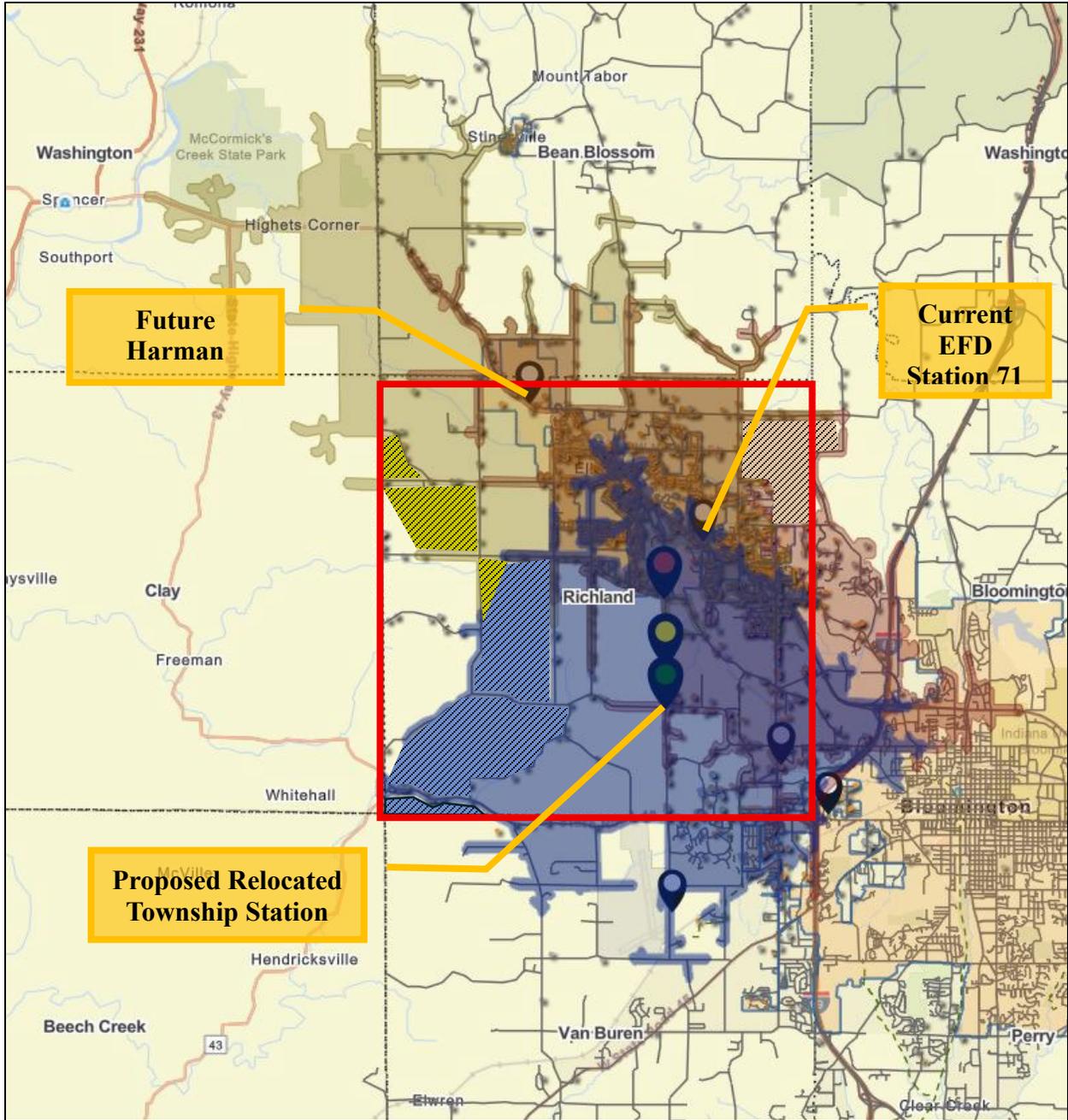


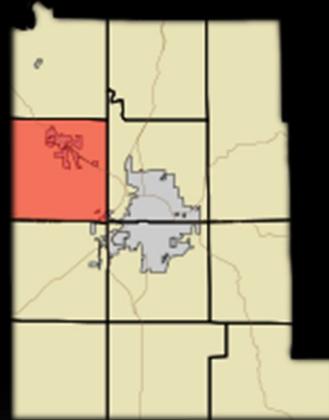
Figure 8: Town/Township 3-Station Response Coverage (9-minute response analysis)
*hashed areas are estimates depending on access points to properties



Planning Department Reorganization Recommendation

The Department of Planning is responsible for coordinating all aspects of planning and development throughout Ellettsville. Day-to-day planning activities center around a number of areas, including permit reviews, code enforcement, residential and commercial building inspections, and providing general guidance to the public. This is the aspect of planning that consumes a majority of the department's time and resources but is vital as these activities support the long-range goals of growth and development. With the future development potential due to the reorganization and land availability, the department will see a major increase in the application of building permits and the subsequent inspections of new residential and commercial construction inspections.

The Public Safety Subcommittee feels that this will require the addition of one full-time employee to ensure permit applications are reviewed and processed in a timely manner and construction inspections can be completed efficiently and thoroughly. The additional personnel expenses will be offset by fees collected for construction permits.



Public Safety Subcommittee

**Zachary Michael
John Newcomer
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